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SUBJECT: GREEK VIEWS ON UNGA THIRD COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

REF: SECSTATE 145641

11. (SBU) On October 18, PolOff delivered reftel points on U.S. positions on UNGA Third Committee resolutions to Ambassador Georgios Dimitriadis, deputy head of the MFA D4 Directorate for Human Rights Issues.

12. (SBU) On October 25, DepPolCouns discussed the issues further with Dimitriadis. His responses below are keyed to the major demarche topics.

-- "No-Action" Motions: Greece had long opposed the use of such motions, as had the EU. Human rights, Dimitriadis argued, was the basis of civilization and the prerequisite for peace and stability. If no-action motions were allowed, discussion of critical human rights issues was restricted. There was no other global forum in which such discussions could take place. Thus, it was important that Greece, the U.S., and others allow discussion of human rights questions to go forward by opposing no-action motions.

-- Iran: Dimitriadis said Canada had already approached Greece about supporting its Iran resolution. Greece, along with the rest of the EU, would support the resolution.

-- Belarus, Burma, DPRK: Dimitriadis said the EU would offer resolutions on Belarus, Burma, and North Korea. He was unsure how these resolutions would relate to any U.S. resolutions -- i.e., whether the EU would join with the U.S. or offer its own resolutions. In any case, Greece and the rest of the EU in principle agreed with the U.S. position on human rights issues in those three countries.

-- Elections Resolution: Greece supported the U.S. position in principle but Dimitriadis had no details on the mechanics of its vote at the UN.

--Religious Intolerance: Greece remains unsure on whether the EU should table the resolution in the Third Committee, as we suggested. He believed the issue would be left to the experts in NY to decide, since it was essentially a tactical issue they were best equipped to handle.

-- Defamation of Religion: Greece agreed with the U.S. position. Freedom of belief was an important human right, "defamation" of religion was not a legitimate human rights issue and was used as a way to stifle freedom of expressions. Greece would vote accordingly.

-- Death Penalty: Dimitriadis understood that the U.S. would oppose the resolution but that it would not work against it through such tactics as no-action motions, etc. Greece appreciated this position. Still, Greece "strongly" opposed the death penalty because of its irreversibility. "If new evidence should come up," he argued, "an innocent man who was executed could not be brought back to life."

